



Governor Herrera's Weekly COVID-19 Update – 10/08/2020

(Video Script)

Greetings! This is Governor Herrera. I hope you and your family are well.

As mentioned in last weeks video, I would like to provide a follow up from GCCS re-entry draft plan on data I've received that is based on a month to month community survey taken in August and September of 2020. The results state that 61.8% of parents preferred fully online and 38.2% of parents supported some type of face-to-face. A month later in September, parents who preferred fully online decreased to 53.3% and those who supported some type of face-to-face, increased to 46.7%. Staff were also surveyed in August with 48.5% preferred fully online and 51.5% supported some type of face-to-face. A month later in September, staff who preferred fully online increased to 65% and those who supported some type of face-to-face decreased to 35%. In a recent survey, Laguna-Acoma parents were asked if they were willing to return to the hybrid model (a combination of some in-person days and some on-line days) and 57% of parents said yes. Staff also responded to this same question with 62% willing to return to the hybrid model as well. To view the hybrid model information, you can head to the NMPED website.

Now, as we move through October and the fall season, I'd like to stress the importance of the COVID-19 Safe Practices we've implemented here at the Pueblo. Face masks not only protect you, but those around you. You should be wearing a face mask every time you leave your home and when you're around those who are not members of your household. Here is an image that shows "Proper face mask wearing." As you can see, this image shows how NOT to wear a facemask...do not wear your face mask around your neck, on your forehead, under your nose, on your chin, dangling from one ear, only on your nose, or on your arm. The next image shows how to properly wear a face mask. Make sure it fits snugly over your nose and mouth. Everyone over 2 years of age should be wearing a face mask.

The second COVID-19 safe practice is social distancing which means keeping your distance about 6-feet away from others who are not members your household. We say 6-feet is a safe distance because science tells us that when we speak, droplets from our mouths travel a certain distance and the virus travels through our droplets. We have also gained recent knowledge that when people without a mask sing or yell or are breathing heavily they produce fine droplets that are able to stay in the air much longer putting people at risk who are farther than 6 feet away and those that may walk through the area where the particles remain. And lastly, washing

your hands for at least 20 seconds. The COVID-19 safe practices are everyone's responsibility to keep our families and community safe!

Next, I would like to talk about the rising cases in our State. According to the New Mexico Department of Health, the State of New Mexico's spread rate is back in the red and average daily cases have grown. In addition, all regions of the State are seeing an increased rate of COVID-19 positive cases especially in the Southeastern counties. Here on the Pueblo, we've also seen a rise in COVID-19 positive cases. In the past two weeks we've had 7 positive cases; 5 of these cases do not reside within the Pueblo but are included in the Pueblos workforce population.

I want to remind everyone again on the importance of essential travel and the need to stay home as much as possible. The Nation, State, and Pueblo are all experiencing what we'd call "COVID Burnout" meaning people are becoming less cautious and responsible for their daily interactions in this health pandemic. A second wave of this virus is beginning to show, so we need to ensure that our community is prepared by maintaining all COVID-19 safe practices. The EOC contact tracers are now seeing increased COVID-19 cases as a result of non-essential activities and travel by community members. The majority of positive cases are being traced back to the following types of activities not only within the Pueblo but also throughout the State of NM, those include: auto repair shops, appliance repair shops, hair and nail salons, and laundry services. We understand that everyone is getting restless and are wanting to adventure out, however, these types of activities pose a high risk for you and your household. This past week we've had 2 exposure events at Laguna Rainbow Nursing Home and 2 exposure events at Laguna Development Corporation. At this time, 33 individuals have been tested which also place 33 households in quarantine. All of these individuals are being managed and cared for by our EOC team.

Now for the COVID-19 case update, the Pueblo stands at 47 total positive cases, 44 recovered, 1 deceased, and 2 active cases within the Pueblo boundaries. Again, we need to keep our guard up and prepare for the upcoming cold and flu season which will happen while we are still in the COVID-19 pandemic. Remember, if you are feeling ill please stay home and get tested as soon as possible. You may call the COVID Info line at 505-328-5682 to get assistance with testing. You may also call your primary care provider to seek guidance.

Laguna Rainbow Center Update - Beginning this week of October 5, 2020, the Laguna Rainbow Corporation Management and Board reports that all residents and staff recently tested for COVID-19 have come back negative. A total of 110 tests were conducted. This was in response to a staff member who tested positive in the nursing facility on September 29, 2020. This is the fourth positive case at Rainbow since the pandemic hit for which the staff has acted swiftly to

provide the necessary protections for the 45-46 residents in the building. This last case did challenge Rainbow's nursing staff levels due to required quarantine, but with the Pueblo of Laguna's EOC support we were able to act quickly to address stressed staffing levels and provide immediate contact tracing and testing.

Rest assured that expertise exists on the Board and within the staffing structure to engage credentialed staff needed to handle care during the pandemic, knowing that shortages exist in the healthcare industry across the nation. In addition, the Rainbow Director of Nursing is in close contact with Pueblo of Laguna EOC on additional needed support for PPE, testing, contact tracing, and staffing support. Rainbow Management and Board Members would like to highlight support from LDHME and LDC for offering housing support to temporary nursing staff from outside the community. Because the staff at Rainbow know it takes a community to protect our elders, they are deeply grateful for the well wishes and support provided from so many. As they prepare for the winter months and the next anticipated wave, please keep the residents and staff in your prayers.

Now, you may want to have your calendars ready to mark these important dates:

First, the Pueblo will be hosting a COVID-19 test and Flu Vaccine event that will be scheduled in mid-October. Incentives will be given out to those brave enough to be swabbed for COVID-19 and vaccinated for the flu. Keep an eye out for this announcement coming soon!

Next, the Pueblo-wide election will be coming up on December 21, 2020. The Pueblo election will be conducted by 100% absentee ballot and ballots will be mailed out no later than November 6th. In my previous video, I mentioned that postcards were mailed out to all tribal members about the election and to ensure that everyone has an updated address on file with the Enrollment Office. Correction, the postcards were mailed to individual households and not to individual tribal members. We understand that we have several tribal members within each household and rather than sending an individual postcard to each household member, only one postcard per household was sent. However, each tribal member within each household will be mailed a ballot. If you need to update your address information, please do so before October 31st by contacting the Enrollment Office at 505-552-6654.

Lastly, the 2020 Census deadline date has been extended AGAIN to Saturday, October 31st. If you have not completed your census, please do so now to be counted.

Speaking of October 31st...Trick-or-treating and Halloween community events have been canceled in the Pueblo of Laguna. CDC considers Halloween a high-risk activity. With the high rise in COVID-19 positive cases in our State and on the Pueblo, we can not risk putting our

community in danger. Please no gathering of 5 or more, this includes costume contests, Halloween parties of any kind or truck-or-treating events.

Finally, an update to last weeks wood hauling message, there will be no wood hauling in Unit 4 Jackward due to restricted access through Acoma Pueblo. Wood selling is currently not allowed if the wood was harvested within Laguna boundaries. Please make sure to your tribal ID with you.

In, closing please continue the efforts to keep our families and community safe by following all the COVID-19 safe practices. Please do not gather in groups larger than 5, socialize at a distance, wash your hands, wear a face mask if you must go out, don't touch your face with unwashed hands, and stay at home to the greatest extent possible. I wish you all well and you and your families remain safe.

Thank you!